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HOW PERMISSIVE ARE YOU?

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The idea of permissiveness, however, has a real place as part of our plan for bringing up children. Let's therefore see some of the ways in which we have sometimes misused it, and also consider in what ways it can be of real value.

Being permissive can mean a number of things. It can mean letting the child develop at his own rate without undue pressures or attempts to hurry him. It can mean discarding blame and recrimination, and never correcting or punishing the child for his behaviour. It has also been taken as meaning that one should let the child do as he likes, without restraint and direction. In this last sense, a permissive parent is one who lets nature take its course, and denies the child the steadying hand of direction and supervision.

The complete use of ideas such as free-expression, self-demand, and permissiveness are, in effect, a denial of the need or desirability of training. They suggest that the important thing is to keep hands off and let the child's personality unfold by itself. This, in turn, seems to rest on a kind of blind faith in nature, heredity, maturation, or on some process that will take care of things if we do not interfere. However, a knowledge of development will not allow us to maintain such a faith. The individual is the product of a number of influences, among which are, of course, constitutional or hereditary factors. But these are by no means the whole story. The kinds of experience which the child has also play a large part in his development. The child who is allowed to do whatever he likes becomes the person with little sense of responsibility, one who may fail to consider the rights and feelings of others. I watched a brash young ten-year-old push his way into a line ahead of hundreds of others, and when someone pointed out to him that he should take his place at the end of the line as the rest had done, he merely shrugged his shoulders and said he didn't have to, that he would do as he liked. He is possibly the product of a home in which parents had thought they were being permissive but were actually letting the child do as he wanted, without restraint or direction.

To be a happy, efficient member of society implies a level of self-discipline that is seen in living by the rules, taking other people into account, and curbing personal desires in favour of group goals. This can only happen through a planned discipline that provides opportunities to both understand and abide by the sensible rules of social life. The main point is that the child, because he is a child, can not always know what is best for himself or the group to which he belongs. True, his parents and teachers do not always know either; but they have a better chance of knowing than the child. Obviously, the child cannot be allowed always to do as he pleases if we want to keep him safe and sound and to have him learn how to live with other people.

The other side of the picture is equally important. The child whose desires are frequently thwarted, whose activity is so hemmed in with rules and prohibitions that he can have no feeling of freedom or self-direction, shows the results of this in his resentments, his breaking out in rebellion, and his aggression.

What does all this mean for the parent who wants to "do the best" for the child? It means both permissiveness and discipline, stepping in and also keeping hands off. In other words, it is not as simple as choosing between discipline and permissiveness. It is not a question of one or the other, but of *both*. The real problem is to know how to use both in the right mixture, to know when to be permissive and when it is necessary to direct or prohibit. To further complicate the picture, the proportions of permissiveness and discipline have to change as the child learns and progresses towards maturity.

How can we decide when to be permissive and when to interfere and direct, require, or prohibit? We can get an answer to this when we consider the functions and meaning of parenthood, the nature of the child, and the goals we are working for. Parents are faced with the challenging job of protecting the child until he can look after himself, seeing that he has opportunities to learn how to manage his own affairs, guiding him from childish selfishness towards being a socialized person, and seeing that he keeps moving gradually towards self-disciplined adulthood. Children do not become adults automatically. They do so when they have had sufficient practice in directing their own behaviour, and when the consequences of what they do are such that the practice results in the right kind of learning. Here is a simple example.

A little child wants an ice cream cone. His mother says, "No, not now." The child kicks and screams, and finally the mother gets him the cone to keep him quiet. What has the child learned? He has learned that to kick and scream is one way of getting what he wants. He learns to connect his own behaviour with its results. This is how he learns most things. He remembers what leads to success and what leads to failure. If we want the child to learn how to live in a complex world with other people, there are some situations in which we cannot be permissive. The little child who throws his food on the floor can learn that when he does this he goes hungry until the next meal; but he can learn this only if the parent sees that this is what happens. The child who writes on the wall with his crayons is deprived of the crayons to help him learn that there are right and wrong ways and places to use them. So, obviously, permissiveness is not a universal rule. There are some behaviours that are not permitted.

Permissiveness is sometimes a reaction away from a strict, cold, autocratic, command-obey kind of discipline. But discarding one scheme does

not necessarily mean that we have to go to the opposite extreme; in fact, extremes are usually undesirable in this area. Nor is it necessary to discard *all* control just because some people have made control too stringent. Some amount of control is absolutely necessary with young children. The important question is how this control is to be exercised and in what situations.

Children like to know where they stand, to know what is allowed and what is out of bounds. To be completely permissive throws too heavy a burden on young shoulders. A minimum set of planned, reasonable requirements which the child must accept is not only a good idea but a necessity, if the child is to develop in a healthy way. These requirements should be clearly understood by the child and enforced in a consistent manner. The main principle of their administration is the use of reasonable arbitrary consequences for non-conformity; that is, when the child fails to live up to a known requirement he suffers some logical consequence or result. For example, when he cannot abide by the rules of the social group, he cannot be a member of that group until he is ready to accept the rules. In this way, he learns that each situation makes demands on him, and that there is an appropriate way of behaving in it. Permissiveness may give him the impression that his behaviour is subject to the whims of mother, father, or teacher, who generously permit him to do certain things. What we want him to learn is that he himself chooses to behave in certain ways, and that if his choices are undesirable he will suffer the results of his unwise choices.

There is a very definite place for permissiveness; it is in those areas that do not involve requirements. Here the child can feel that the adult not only permits but welcomes his free choice of activities. A sense of freedom and self-direction is valuable, and should be encouraged whenever possible. Of course, even in such free activity situations there have to be limits and boundaries and even rules. But these rules and limits can be made to contribute to, rather than hinder, the feeling of freedom.

I suppose one of the reasons why permissiveness does not appeal to me as a guiding concept is that it seems to cast the parent in such a passive role. It seems to say that the adult, out of the goodness of his heart, allows the child to do things. The parent becomes a kind of benevolent onlooker. But the parent's role, as I see it, is far from passive. It is a very definitely active one in which he provides, directs, supervises, and, where necessary, arranges arbitrary consequences to aid the child's learning. Permissiveness seems to leave out this active interest and participation, which is so vital a part of being a parent. However, it does imply that instead of telling the child everything he should or must do, the parent plans and arranges situations so that the child can make some of

his own choices. It is not, then, a matter of being either permissive or autocratic, but rather of knowing when it is wise to be permissive and when it is necessary to enforce rules and requirements.

Another aspect of the permissive idea is the relationship between adult and child: the parent-child or teacher-child relationship. Our increasing knowledge of child development points to the value of a warm, trusting, sympathetic relationship. At one time, adults thought that it was necessary to be cold and distant in order to maintain control. The old picture of a good disciplinarian was that of a fearsome, unbending, unfriendly, remote figure who dispensed painful punishment for any sign of disobedience. We know now that to strike terror into the heart of a child in order to maintain control is a very dangerous technique for any parent or teacher. However, we know that it is not necessary to forgo all regulation in dispensing with the use of fear and intimidation. A parent or teacher can be warm and friendly, and still be consistent and just in enforcing sensible, necessary requirements. Warmth and affection do not necessarily mean indulging the child's every whim. This is the danger in the permissive concept. It has meant to some parents that they must not make demands on the child, that they must be indulgent even when it is not in the best interests of the child.

Children thrive in an atmosphere in which they feel they are wanted and liked. It is not possible to love a child too much, but it is rather easy to misuse love, or to let love stand in the way of helping the child become a responsible, self-disciplined individual. It is both possible and necessary to blend love, justice, and consistency. It is a misuse of love to try to control the child by such statements or implications as "Mother can only love you when you are good." And love need not stand in the way of seeing that the child experiences the logical results of his own non-conformity. Rules, requirements, and prohibitions that are reasonable and necessary and that are consistently enforced need not interfere with this warm, friendly, affectionate relationship. Indeed the reverse is so, for the child's trust in the parent, which is a part of this, develops best on the foundation of a reasonable, consistent plan of discipline.

We come back to our original question, "How permissive are you?" But now we are not thinking in narrow terms of just letting the child do what he likes; we are thinking of helping the child grow and learn. We are thinking of being on good terms with the child, understanding him, having faith in him, and giving him a chance to have faith in us. Children need to feel that we are with them and for them, that we are their friends as well as their parents and teachers. At the same time, they must have the direction and regulation that give them a feeling of knowing where they stand, what they can do, and what is out of bounds.

This is the most challenging and the most important part of parenthood: to be able to blend reasonable control and sensible permissiveness.

In summary, here are some guiding principles which each individual parent has to apply in the ways most suitable to his own particular situation:

(1) Provide the child with an atmosphere of affection and warmth. Make him feel that he is wanted and respected, and that he is loved, whether good or bad.

(2) Have a planned set of sensible requirements that are understood by the child. Follow through on these necessities, and see that the child lives up to them or suffers the consequences of his neglect.

(3) Treat each child as an individual, a person different from all other people. Avoid comparisons and unreasonable expectations.

(4) Be as consistent and as just as it is humanly possible to be. Consistency helps the child to know both where he stands and what he can expect. But consistency is not enough. It is possible to be consistently unjust to the child, so both consistency and justice are needed.

(5) Provide plenty of opportunities for the child to have the freedom of self-chosen activities. Help him to know the limits of his freedom, but be sure these boundaries are reasonable.

(6) Remember that the child does not stand still. Every month adds new skills and knowledge, and makes him more capable of managing his own affairs. A reasonable discipline takes this into account, and provides for increasing freedom and responsibilities.

(7) Try to be as positive in your approach as possible. Encouragement is always better than criticism, redirection than prohibition, and trust than suspicion.

(8) Enjoy your children and make it possible for your children to enjoy you. Children can be a nuisance, but if they are irritating most of the time, it is necessary to examine the situation and see what should be done. When parents enjoy their children most of the time, it is an indication that a healthy relationship exists.

(9) Try not to make the child feel small and unimportant. His ignorance and lack of skill and experience can produce a feeling of inferiority and inadequacy; what he needs is not to have this increased, but to have his feeling of self-esteem and self-confidence reinforced by parental encouragement and confidence.

(10) Make the child feel that he belongs in the family. Give him a place in the work, in the planning, and in the fun of living together.

Every Day's a Holiday

R. G. N. LAIDLAW

WHAT'S the good of a birthday if you can't do what you like?" We know what Gracie Fields means. It is a time-honoured custom to let the birthday boy do what he likes, even to the point of getting horribly sick. The birthday boy can do no wrong. The ancient pagan was given licence to be licentious. The shriner-legionnaire is tolerated in his prankishness; it's only his adolescence showing. The big black book of reckoning has been laid aside for a day.

Yet the book is back again the next day. The jinks are packed away on the high shelf, and we shift back into low for the daily grind. Little wonder that some of us live lives of quiet desperation. On an ordinary day, there is shocked silence in response to laughter in any but the furthest back hall.

Must there be prescription as to the occasions when happiness is permitted? Can we not find moments of happiness every day?

The manufacturers of happiness—the synthetics trade—have a yes answer. Rather over-eagerly they prescribe a dose or two of happiness per night, via the TV pipeline. We are invited to become consumers, and complimented when in our apathy we enjoy consuming the "relaxed" performer. The people on the screen are our guests, we are told—which may be manna to the lonely, solitary ones. But what a block to the true meeting of family members is such a guest—a guest who keeps us apart except in the least-common-denominator of response to *him*. The best moment in the home is the rare one when all viewers present agree against a particular show; and such a moment is immediately lost in turning to the seedy alternative and putting up with *that*. Should we sit in our living rooms, looking squarely away from our own living, occupied with the possible problems of others and their magical solutions, hoping for the relief of the near naturalism of such a story as that of a good butcher, who doesn't know what he wants to do tonight?

Surely the laughter greeting that line was partly indicative of the shock of recognizing ourselves in the Chayefsky mirror. After all, what *is* there to do tonight, or tomorrow, or next weekend, except to scurry madly around, building illusions or plugging holes in dikes, or to wait in

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boredom for the next ring in the circus to light up? And in that ring? Dogs, nothing but dogs.

Yet is there not, astonishingly, in the next room, laughter? What *can* be going on? Are the people there, by any chance, tuned in on the dream programme which always appears on a channel other than the ones available to us? Or could it be that they are *living*—living as truly human beings, asserting human values against countinghouse values, accepting failings, improving on strengths, sharing viewpoints, working together, creating one another through participating in togetherness, contributing to the development of man? Surely day-to-day living is a matter of persons coming together in a wide variety of patterns and for all manner of purposes. And each coming together is an opportunity; for the persons may “pass a miracle” and find themselves partners in a “we.” The moment of communion with another is not necessarily, of its nature, rare. Most of us have such moments with one or two persons, and some happy ones have them in most of their relationships. All of us, however, can extend the range of other persons with whom we participate fully in this sense.

How can *one* person do anything about this? By starting, and sticking at it. By recognizing the risks and skating bravely among them. After all, you are contravening the canons in talking about yourself at all: to admit a weakness embarrasses everybody; to declare a strength is to be a boaster. But you are not out to “hold the stage.” You are sowing seeds, pointing to a process that can only emerge if others take up the cultivation too. You would appeal to your colleagues—whether in home, office, school, shop, or factory—to pass beyond Voltaire’s advice that each of us should cultivate only his own garden. We work together, grow together.

What need, then, for holidays? By all means, let there still be holidays; but they could be something better than escapes, releases, the uncagings of the captive bird. We could return to work without changing back to the striped clothes, feeling shades of the prison house closing in. The prospect would be such that we might truly say, “Every day’s a holiday!”

Everyone Can Draw

MARJORIE WILSON

I CAN'T draw and I don't want to." Parents sometimes still hear their children say this, in spite of the fact that education in art has improved tremendously in recent years. Nowadays libraries are full of books on Child Art. Pioneers in this field have made us increasingly aware of the value of this aspect of education; UNESCO has held a conference and produced a large volume devoted entirely to a discussion of the importance of art in human experience. Art education today is often a far cry from the bottles and drapes of our own childhood, and workers and teachers in this field deserve our sincere admiration and thanks.

Nevertheless, not all teachers have the knowledge and zeal of Arthur Lismer, and many of our children are still receiving inadequate art education. School teachers are among the busiest people in the world; and we must avoid criticism of the poor mathematics teacher who is called upon to squeeze art lessons into an already tight schedule. But for parents who feel that such an education is important, it is disturbing to hear their child say, "I can't draw and I don't want to." How can parents keep such an attitude from developing?

Prevention is always more effective and often less painful than a cure. The time to begin fostering a love of art is when the child is very young, and before he has encountered any unfortunate art experiences. Fortunately, there are some simple principles that can help any parent.

Fill your home with drawing materials. Even the adult artist will put off painting if he has to travel downtown to buy the tools of his trade, but with a corner full of canvases and a table crammed with brushes and paints, it will be difficult to keep him from his work. When you teach a child to cook, you do not hide all the ingredients in the attic. Have all the materials of creative activity readily available and *visible*. This is not an expensive plan. It is certainly cheaper than replacing wallpaper or painting walls; and this may be necessary if you do not provide paper, unless you wish to stifle all urge to scribble and draw. Newsprint and brown wrapping paper are both inexpensive. Coloured construction paper appeals to most children, and there are a hundred sources of colour in wax

Marjorie Wilson, B.A., Dip. Ed., editorial secretary for the BULLETIN, taught child art for two years, and is becoming known in the Canadian commercial art field.

crayons, coloured pencils, chalks, poster paints, and water colours. If you live in a small apartment and have no space in which your child can make his artistic mess, your choice of materials may have to be limited. The child will miss the freedom that comes from the flow and speed of liquid colour, and he will not be able to achieve such wonderfully satisfying and exciting large effects. However, different kinds of crayons and chalks can do almost as well as paint, and a blackboard will encourage him to draw on a larger scale. If the parent has the right attitude, the child will have almost as valuable an experience.

And what of the parent's attitude? Should he praise, criticize, suggest, or question? Some educators feel that praise should be avoided. However, I have seen the art of too many children expand and flower under praise to believe that it has no value. Praise, rightly used, is really an expression of shared enjoyment. Of course, if praise becomes the main goal of the small artist, we have failed in what we set out to do. As in music, it is "the process, not the product" that is important. If the child develops a love of the process itself, we need not fear the sting of the teacher who is critical of young methods of putting ideas and emotions on paper. Therefore, we must take care. Praise can give the child confidence; it must not become his only purpose. Interest is always needed, and if the school is deficient in this respect, the child should know that it is always available at home.

To criticize a young child's drawings is obviously to tread on dangerous ground. Clearly it is safer to say, "Tell me about your picture," than "What on earth is that? Draw it this way." If we do not find fault with a child's method of learning to walk, how can we censure his first staggering pencil strokes? If for no other reason, we have no right to criticize what we do not understand. And how much more sensible to paint the sky only at the top of the page! It is up, and we are down.

Should we make suggestions? Certainly—if we are asked for them, or when the child runs out of ideas. But we are a contrary species, and everyone prefers to express his own world in his own way. Suggestions can be valuable to a child; they can lead to new ideas and unexplored media. But slide your suggestion in under the mat. If the child thinks that it is *his* idea, the result will be more satisfying to him, and probably more pleasing to you than if he draws exactly what you suggest. In a similar way, colouring books can limit the imagination. They provide the basic shapes, and the child has only to "fill in." A blank page is much more exciting than are ready-made pictures of people and houses. Too many colouring books can lead the child to feel that there is only one way to draw, or they may entirely smother the urge to draw.

One of the most valuable things you can do to encourage your child's

interest in drawing is to start drawing too. You may regard this as a sacrifice made for your son—for the first few days; after that, you may enjoy it so much that you will forget about baking and washing for hours at a time. Fathers may find the activity quite as rewarding as an hour spent behind the Sports Page. Your child will see your interest, and his enthusiasm will soar.

If, then, your home is crammed with art materials, if your attitude is one of interest and pleasure in your child's creative efforts, if you feel that this is an important part of your child's development, you have little to fear from an unsympathetic teacher in the first few years at school. If your child has developed an intense love of drawing and painting, it is probable that he will survive a whole school career full of art criticism, perspective, and still life.

However, do not be surprised or alarmed if your child's interest in art wanes. If you have laid the groundwork for creativity at home, there is little reason to suppose that this part of his education is over.


Your realization of his dwindling interest in art may dawn when you hear, "I don't want to draw. I can't even draw a straight line." Few people can. What your son probably means is, "I can't draw a horse that looks like a horse." Almost anyone can learn how to do this. If you are someone who "can't draw," you will not believe that this is true. However, given adequate motivation, a few simple principles of proportion, and an understanding of the relation of forms, you can draw a horse. It may be no work of art, but it will be a horse. Your child may or may not be ready for instruction of this sort. However, this is not your job, unless you are already a painter of horses. Leave that to the child himself or to a teacher. It is your job to provide the incentive.


There are various general ways to check lagging interest. A new type of material may help; and a few tubes of oil paint and several brushes do not cost much. Let the child mix his paints to obtain more colours; this can be a new experience too. A sketching trip, with parents participating, can be great fun. It does not matter if the parent draws peculiar looking trees; what better way to raise your son's estimation of his own trees! The trip can include a picnic and a swim; and the sketching will afterwards be associated with a great deal of pleasure.


Let your child see that the world of art is very big. Bring into your home paintings by impressionists, expressionists, surrealists; let him see that some people have drawn pictures in which the horses *do not* look like horses. It would be useless to force this sort of education; but a few books of reproductions from the library, if left about, can be very enticing. Let them be *there*, like the materials; and be ready to talk about them broadmindedly and interestingly when questions arise.

For the child who has stopped drawing because he cannot draw in a representational way, there is something specific to do to encourage him. We can introduce him to the idea not only of appreciating, but of drawing, in the abstract. It is fortunate that the time when artistic interest wavers is often when a child is very interested in new ideas and unfamiliar knowledge. Thus we may introduce the following technique as a "game" to a child of eight, and as an "experiment" to a more sophisticated youngster.

Start your "game" by suggesting, "Today we are going to draw things that we cannot see." What a fascinating idea! Or what a silly one! You are bound to get some reaction, and if the children feel nothing else, they will be curious. Follow this startling statement with a discussion of colour, asking them what "states of mind" they think of when they think of red. You may get no answers, but I very much doubt it. One child is bound to say, "Anger," another, "Embarrassment." Continue the discussion with other colours, with stripes, polka dots, colour combinations. If you convince them that there are no wrong answers, their enthusiasm will lead to countless suggestions.

Then talk to them about lines. "Is this a sad or a happy line?" 

"Is this a bored or a nervous line?"  "What kind of a line is

this?"  If a few neighbouring children have been brought into the game, the answers will come thick and fast. Make it a rule of the game that no one may put an object or a person in his picture; only lines and colour may appear in the drawings. Try such a list as this: Fun, Worry, Excitement, Fear. Then tell them to draw two pictures from the list of titles, or to choose their own. The results may startle you, but the child's interest in art may have been reawakened in the process. He may go back to struggling with his horses, and now is the best time to introduce the kind of formal instruction that can help him; or he may want more games and experiments. In either case, you have subtly sparked his interest, and you may find yourself running up a sizeable bill at the art supply store.

And why all this effort to bring art to your child? Why sing? Why dance? Why love life and want to express it? We do not need to read books on creativity to obtain the answer. Anyone who has experienced the delights of bringing something out of a blank page or from a lump of clay knows it. When you are alone, and often when you are not, there is no diversion, no joy, no excitement, no comfort, to surpass it.

Well Children*

... Such, then, are our explorations into mental health. We begin by looking at it where it exists, namely in well children. To see what well children are like, we have had to bare our eyes, removing the haze of our preconceptions and the veil of familiarity with pathology. We have had to learn to look with new vision. Now, being able to see wellness, we have had to learn to describe it and eventually to assess and measure it. We have had to devise tests which will tell us, not what is wrong with the child, but what is right. This new vision, however, cannot be superficial. It must be penetrating, for we know that the appearance of wellness can be manifest while mentally cancerous roots are growing, and therefore new psychological tools which will penetrate the surface of overt behaviour will be necessary. We will also need a new, or perhaps a very old vocabulary, for the words to describe well activity are few. These, then, are tasks before us, markers on the trail that leads towards the goal of understanding mental health. . . .

This statement, from our recently published booklet entitled *Well Children*, sums up the aims of our work at the Institute of Child Study, and explains the research responsibilities which we have assumed under the sponsorship of a Federal Health Grant. It also reflects the theme of this booklet, which tells the story of what we have done during the past two and one half years, under our expanded programme.

In the opening chapter we have tried to express our way of interpreting mental health.

... People have viewed mental health in many ways . . . We do not think it lies in freedom from pathology, ideal personality, in adjustment to society or in normalcy . . . we watch these children in school, . . . They have their inadequacies, their conflicts, and difficulties, but these are not symptoms of mental health; they are rather part of the essentials of human living . . . wellness is demonstrated by the way conflicts are solved . . . at the same time, we see every child in situations in which he is functioning happily, constructively, harmoniously, uniquely . . . to discover the sources from which these well qualities develop, is the crux of our research effort. . . .

In the second chapter, we have set out for consideration some of the values upon which we are working out our school programme.

... To state that our schools attempt to provide a salutary environment is relatively easy; to achieve one in actuality becomes considerably more difficult . . . in thinking

**Well Children*, a progress report on the research conducted at the Institute of Child Study, University of Toronto, July 1953 to December 1955, by the Director and staff of the Institute, under Federal Health Grant 605-5-147. Editor—Mary L. Northway; Committee—Dorothy A. Millichamp, Carroll Davis, Betty Flint. Produced at the University of Toronto Press, Toronto, Canada, 1956. Pp. 89. \$1.00. May be ordered from the University of Toronto Press.

of a salutary environment we include . . . one which enables children to learn to use their minds and to have confidence in their attempts, not fearing the inevitable circumstance of being wrong before being right. . . .

The third chapter of the booklet describes our plan of research and is followed by a brief report of present studies.

. . . So, it is quite apparent that teachers, parent educationists, students, parents, children, and research workers all participate in our research programme . . . Each in his own unique way sees something of the truth about growing children which enables greater understanding of mental well-being to grow. . . .

The publication of *Well Children* was made possible by a trust fund set up by parents and friends of the Institute. The booklet is written by the staff to tell these people of our efforts, and to inform the Canadian public to whom we are finally responsible.

DOROTHY A. MILLICHAMP
Assistant Director

LIVING WITH CHILDREN

May we remind our readers that a weekly article from the Institute appears each Thursday in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, under the title "Living With Children." Miss Jocelyn Motyer of our Nursery School staff writes a column about children, based on ideas and material from members of our staff. You and your friends will find these interesting.

PARENT EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The Institute announces a Parent Education Conference to be held Saturday, September 29th, 1956. Meetings and workshops will take place at the Institute building, 45 Walmer Rd., Toronto, starting at 9:30 a.m. The purpose of this Conference is to make it possible for those working with parents, as well as leaders themselves, to discuss together ways and means of stimulating a wider interest in Parent Education. Workshops and a lecture session will be held. Write to the Institute for programme and further information.

Review of Two Records

Twenty-Five Common Songbirds of Ontario—Sounds of Nature, Vol. I, \$3.95, by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, recorded by William W. H. Gunn. 33 1/3 rpm.

A Day in Algonquin Park—Sounds of Nature, Vol. II, \$4.95, by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Toronto, Ontario, 1955, recorded by William W. H. Gunn. 33 1/3 rpm.

IN ALL THE WORLD, there are only two types of creatures who sing: birds and human beings. Bird songs are stereotyped and limited in their repertoire, but they hold a great fascination for human beings. Human song is variable and creative; whether it has equal fascination for the birds, we do not know.

On these two long-playing records, Dr. Gunn has made astonishing use of the tape-recorder to pick up actuality broadcasts of the birds. The *Twenty-Five Common Songbirds of Ontario* includes recordings of most of the birds with which we are all acquainted. Their songs are uninterrupted by any continuity patter from a human master of ceremonies; instead, the record cover gives short descriptions of the artists in each band of music.

A Day in Algonquin Park must thrill all who have known Algonquin's lonely lakes and black spruce trees. Dr. Gunn has recorded not only bird songs here, but other sounds of nature as well: the chattering of a squirrel, the buzz of a mosquito, and even the swish of a paddle beside a canoe. To hear loons calling and laughing, first close by and then far in the distance, fills one with a haunting nostalgia.

These are not primarily children's records, but the children in our schools enjoy them thoroughly. Playing a particular band while showing pictures of the singing birds, a teacher leads into discussion of all kinds of nature. The children see a cardinal in the snow and can hear exactly how it sounds. The Algonquin record recalls the children's summers, and it may be used for discussion of what they did and saw at their lake.

While one title includes "of Ontario," the sounds recorded would be common in most of Eastern Canada and the Eastern United States. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and particularly Dr. Gunn, are to be congratulated heartily on their enterprise.

MARY L. NORTHWAY

INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS

These publications may be ordered from the Institute of Child Study, 45 Walmer Rd., Toronto, Canada. Cheques should be made payable to the University of Toronto.

Offprints from The Bulletin of The Institute of Child Study

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BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by Lindsay Weld

ABOUT CHILDREN

Launching your Preschooler, by EDGAR S. RILEY; illustrated by DOUG ANDERSON.
Sterling Publishing Co. Inc., New York; S.J. Reginald Saunders & Co. Ltd.,
Toronto, 1955. Pp. 124, \$3.50.

THIS book, by a teacher in an elementary school in New York City, is concerned with common first experiences of young children away from home. It suggests many techniques which can be used by parents in such situations as the child's first visit to the barber or dentist, his first train ride. There are useful positive ideas for parents about excursions with young children, shopping, trips to the zoo, appointments with the doctor. The value of the book lies in the fact that the author interprets each experience as it appears to the child, and suggests ways in which it can be handled so that it will be meaningful and enjoyable to him. The line drawings are fun; the sub-headings stand out sharply for easy reference.

Margaret Hetherington

FOR CHILDREN

The New Tube, by EDWARD TRIPP; illustrated by VERONICA REED. Oxford University Press, New York, 1955. Pp. 104, \$2.75.

THIS tale will delight children who choose stories about boys and girls of other lands. It concerns Paco, a young Mexican lad, and his tiny dog, Pacquito, and the many amusing escapades they share, centred around the acquisition of a new tuba for their village. Life there is depicted in a charming manner, and attractive illustrations enhance the book's appeal. After reading it, young readers will feel much better acquainted with Mexico and its people.

Carolyn M. Schmidt

The Master Cat and Other Plays, by DOROTHY JANE GOWLING; illustrated by JACK MEIERST. J. M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Limited, 1955. Pp. 138, \$2.50.

THIS is an invaluable book for any adult or child who is interested in the theatre. Fun to read and fun to act, these plays have already been 'tried out' with great success by the Toronto Children Players. Included in this edition are musical accompaniments and illustrations of appropriate costumes.

Judy Gianelli

Stories from the Bible, by MARGHERITA FANCHIOTTI; illustrated by JOAN KIDDELL-MONROE. Oxford University Press, London, 1955. Pp. 239, \$2.50.

MARGHERITA Fanchiotti has a feeling for story telling. Through her, these stories from the Bible become readily understandable to children, yet lose little of their original beauty. The book begins with the story of Abraham, and follows through to the life of Christ; one feels with each story that the author has been able to find its particular appeal for children. The illustrations are many and dramatic.

Judy Gianelli

A Picture History of Great Discoveries, by CLARKE HUTTON; text by MABEL E. GEORGE.
Oxford University Press, London, 1954. Pp. 62, \$2.50.

THE world of exploration and daring adventurers comes to life for a child as he turns the pages of this book. It is vividly illustrated in a distinctive style; the maps are of particular merit, showing the routes of the explorers in a clear and interesting way. Fascinating, too, are the many sketches of ships, navigation instruments and flags. Slowly the reader finds the map of the world unfolding as he follows the expeditions of Marco Polo, Columbus, Drake, Cook and others. Explorers of the Antarctic and the Northwest Passage are included in this fine picture history. It will be enjoyed thoroughly by most 10 to 12 year olds.

Carolyn M. Schmidt

Glooskap's Country and Other Indian Tales, by CYRUS MACMILLAN; illustrated by JOHN A. HALL. Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1955. Pp. 272, \$3.95.

THIS collection of Indian folktales is taken from two books written by the late Cyrus Macmillan, who was Dean of Arts and Professor of English at McGill University. The stories tell of the exploits of the Indians in the days "before the white men came from Europe to live in the New World", and of the Indian's attempts to account for the evidences of nature around him. Fairies and giants play parts, but special Indians and animals have supernatural powers, too. The sun rises "out of its tent"; Glooskap travels the sea on the back of Blob the Whale; a Raven and a Flea chat together. We learn how Rabbit lost his tail, how the Raven turned black, and how Summer came to Canada. All are Canadian stories, and in our reading we travel from Glooskap's country on the east coast across the land to the Pacific. The involved plots are retold in the simple rhythmical style of a gifted storyteller, and a very outstanding aspect of the publication is the vivid line drawings of John A. Hall, painter, teacher and designer. This book would be suitable for children from 9 to 14, and is particularly recommended for 12 year olds. It also makes fine reading for adults interested in the cultural heritage of our land.

Marie Milton

Stories of King Arthur and His Knights, retold by BARBARA LEONIE PICARD; wood engravings by ROY MORGAN. Pp. 292, \$2.50.

Outcast, by ROSEMARY SUTCLIFF; illustrated by RICHARD KENNEDY. Pp. 229, \$2.25.

Heroes of the White Shield, by ROSEMARY SPRAGUE; illustrated by ELEANOR CURTIS. Pp. 192, \$3.25.

Operation Wild Goose, by ROLAND PERTWEE; illustrated by ERNEST H. SHEPARD. Pp. 202, \$2.25.

Minnow on the Say, by A. PHILIPPA PEARCE; illustrated by EDWARD ARDIZZONE. Pp. 241, \$2.25.

The Wind of Chance, by RENE GUILLOT, translated by NORMAN DALE; illustrated by PIERRE COLLOT. Pp. 188, \$2.00.

Oxford University Press, 1955.

AS a group, these Oxford books seem written to match or beat the dreams of early teen-age boys. Past times and present, far places and near are presented in them with a fine flair. King Arthur's myths of early Britain are re-written in a modern descriptive manner that appeals. These are great adventure stories, tested by time, and presented here to advantage. The CUTCAST tells of a British-raised boy living among the Roman invaders, and describes the life and customs of the early Britons and their conquerors as they influenced one another. From the HEROES OF THE WHITE SHIELD, the actual or potential Viking enthusiast may learn much of Norway and adventure during the advent of Christianity. Three of the six books deal with a more modern period and with boys closer to the reader in age. More immediately "impossible", then, and perhaps even more exciting, OPERATION WILD GOOSE "covers" three boys who run into a combination of uranium and Russian agents in their search for the nesting place of a wild goose in Iceland. In MINNOW ON THE SAY, a little English boy is led to companionship and exploration when he finds an empty canoe drifting down a river. Edward Ardizzone's drawings are a delightful addition here. At the flip of a coin, THE WIND OF CHANCE blows a French boy into an adventure with natives and lumbering in Africa. Rene Guillot's great knowledge of this country enhances the happenings.

THESE six books offer suspense and satisfaction, high adventure, and travel into other times and places. Told by tried and proved tellers for the school age boy. Recommended.

David Bain

The Home, Oxford Junior Encyclopaedia, Volume XI. Oxford University Press, London, 1955. Pp. 495, \$6.00

AS one of a series of twelve volumes, THE HOME has been prepared so that its topics are readily available in alphabetical order. Many items are dealt with by cross-indexing, both within the volume and between volumes. Much of the book deals with the history of various aspects of the home: furniture, lighting, heating and clothing. Many items detail the home crafts, such as sewing, laundry-work, house-cleaning and child care. The physical well-being of the family is covered in a section on medicine and personal care; family relationships are outlined in articles on social customs, entertaining, and preparations for social events. A history of the growth of villages is included, expanding further our view of the home. To the housewife, as well as to the student, this volume will be of interest and value.

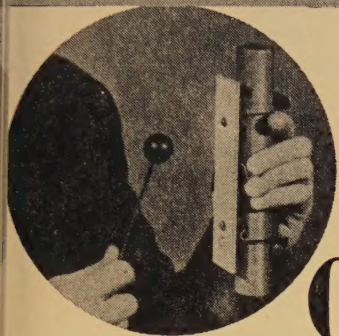
David Bain

Polio Pioneers, The Story of the Fight against Polio, by DOROTHY and PHILIP STERLING; photographs by MYRON EHRENBERG and the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Doubleday & Co, Inc., New York (Toronto), 1955. Pp. 128, \$3.00.

"THE Story of the Fight Against Polio" makes facts of science and figures of history reasonable and interesting to the school-age child. Today's children, receiving Dr. Salk's vaccine, are made to see themselves, along with Pasteur, Jenner, Enders, and Roosevelt, as polio pioneers and party to the wonder of discovery. The telling of POLIO PIONEERS is fairly concentrated, but clear; the myriad photographs are worth many words.

Lindsay Weld

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